

MINUTES OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING FEB 7, 1978

The regular County Council meeting was opened by Chairman Phinney with the opening prayer by Mr. Crain. All Council Members were present.

Minutes of the January 17th meeting were approved as printed upon a motion by Mr. Thomas seconded by Mr. Moore and carried.

County Treasurer Henry Cater requested permission to purchase four validating machines for his office at an approximate cost of \$8,424 which would be included in the 1978-79 budget. Mr. Thomas moved to authorize Mr. Cater to go ahead and place the order for the machines, Mr. Moore seconded and it was approved. It was pointed out by Mr. Cater that these machines would free three calculators presently being used in the Treasurer's office to be used in other departments where needed.

An update on the delinquent tax collections and projections for the next quarter were given by Tax Collector, John Fowler. His collections for the quarter ending December 31, 1977 were \$55,981 and he projected some \$78,000 would be collected in the quarter ending March 31, 1978.

Clerk of Court, Roy D. Harden requested a transfer from his court expense account, which will have a surplus due to court procedure changes, to other items in his budget including books, telephone, office supplies and new typewriters. After discussion on this matter Mr. Moore moved to approve the transfer except for the telephone and new typewriters (amount of transfer was \$2,650). Mr. Herring seconded and the motion was carried.

A report on the activities and duties of the County Veterans Affairs Office was given by Veterans Affairs Officer, Harrison Orr.

Council agreed to authorize Rural Fire Warden Fant Honea to move the rural fire telephone alert system from the Walhalla City Hall to the Law Enforcement Center. It was also agreed to install a telephone line from the tower presently located at the Courthouse to the center. Calls will be handled by the Communications Personnel. It was further agreed to transfer necessary funds from other accounts to cover the cost of installation and monthly charges of the telephone in the Center. Mr. Bailes made the motion which received a second from Mr. Herring and passed.

A discussion and update of the present status of the Oconee Airport by Aeronautics Commission Chairman, Terry Williams resulted in the approval of \$890 to be transferred from the professional services account to the security/contracts account for the salary of a temporary operator at the airport for the month of February. Request for subsequent months would be on a month by month basis. Mr. Williams told Council that hopefully the Commission would have a base operator hired in May. Mr. Bailes made the motion for the transfer, Mr. Thomas seconded and it was carried. Aeronautics Commission was also advised that the new lease agreement for the base operator would have to be approved by Council prior to negotiating with a new Base Operator. Council also agreed to move ahead with the application for a grant for the expansion of the

runway at the airport with the county agreeing to furnish some \$65,000 in kind funding such as grading etc. The only property purchases needed for this expansion will be vacant land.

With the City of Seneca voting not to participate in the county wide sewer project, Council discussed repayment of funds already expended on the project. Since local funds cannot be used, approximately \$600,000 will have to come from revenue sharing funds and Council will have to decide when/if the county's revenue sharing funds to the towns will be withheld.

Mr. Bailes stated that the opinion of the Budget Committee was not to require a detailed budget for the school department this year but agreed to notify them they would be given 66 mills for school department operation and 3½ mills for capital expenditures for the fiscal year 1978-79. Mr. Ables moved, Mr. Herring seconded and it was carried to concur with the Budget Committee's decision.

Three bids for a plaque for the "cage" at the Law Enforcement Center were received. Mr. Cox moved, Mr. Moore seconded and it was carried to accept the low bid of \$281 from an aluminum company in Columbia. This is to be paid from the contingency account.

Mr. Cox moved to approve four manpower jobs (asst. cook at the Law Enforcement Center, policeman at Salem, asst recreation director at the City of Walhalla and a mechanic at the camp). Mr. Herring seconded and in discussion the question was raised as to who the new Crime Prevention Officer worked for (this job too, funded by PSE). Mr. Cox stated he should either be working for the Family Court, Solicitor or Sheriff. Mr. Phinney referred this matter to Mr. Thomas, Chairman of the Law Enforcement Committee for recommendation at the next meeting as to which department he would be working for. Mr. Cox then amended his motion to approve the four jobs mentioned in his first motion plus the job of Crime Prevention Officer. Mr. Crain seconded the amendment - both the motion and amendment were passed.

Mr. Moore moved for \$45,000 to be included in the 1978-79 budget for a new fire truck. He stated he hoped at least one new truck could be purchased each year as some of the trucks have been in operation since the early 1960's. Mr. Bailes seconded the motion which was passed.

The extension of Church Street to the Bell Mill road, to help alleviate the traffic congestion at the new Walhalla High School, was requested by Mr. Moore. He said the right of way has already been obtained to go through the Ritter property and the balance would be on school property. He moved to proceed with this project with manpower help in the trimming of a 66 ft right of way and the county doing the grading with the hope it could be taken over by the State Highway System later. Mr. Bailes seconded the motion after which Mr. Crain requested it be tabled until the Roads and Transportation Committee could look at it and discuss the cost. This was done.

Council approved approximately \$650 from the contingent account for storm windows for the education building. Mr. Herring made the motion, Mr. Moore seconded. It was then recommended that the Buildings and Grounds Committee check other buildings to see if there is a need for other storm windows and report back at the next meeting.

Tire bids were discussed by Councilman Frady and the possibility of getting bids yearly rather than each 6 months was discussed.

A request for the transfer of \$1,000 from the custodian's salary account to the maintenance account for repairs to the furnace at the Children's Home was presented by Mr. Thomas. The cost estimate for this repair was \$700, however the remaining \$300 was requested for maintenance for the remainder of the year. An additional request for a transfer of \$1500 to improve furnishings was requested. Mr. Thomas moved to transfer the actual cost of the furnace repair (\$700) and refer the furnishing request to the Children's Home Committee to determine the need. Mr. Herring seconded and it was agreed.

Mr. Thomas moved to transfer \$2,000 from the contingent account to the Sheriff's budget to be used as drug buy money. This motion was seconded by Mr. Cox and unanimously carried. The salary of the Law Enforcement Center Director was raised from \$12,114 to \$14,000 effective February 1 to put him in line with other department heads. The motion by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Herring and carried.

Mr. Ables moved to appoint Mr. J. N. Golden, of the Crossroads area to replace Mr. Don Richardson on the Tax Appeals Board and to reappoint Mrs Charlotte Holmes of the Bayshore area. Mr. Thomas seconded and the motion was carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 P.M.